Activity

Think Your Drink

Activity Synopsis

After discussing what they know and want to learn about different beverages, students work in groups to decide how much sugar is added to cola, sports drink, fruit punch and chocolate milk.

Afterwards, they determine the nutritious choices by lining up according to the nutrients in beverages and comparing and discussing the results.

Activity Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Describe what "added sugar" means
- Compare eight beverages and identify the nutritious choices
- Write two things they learned from this activity and one thing they can do to make sure they choose nutritious beverages

Materials and Advance Prep

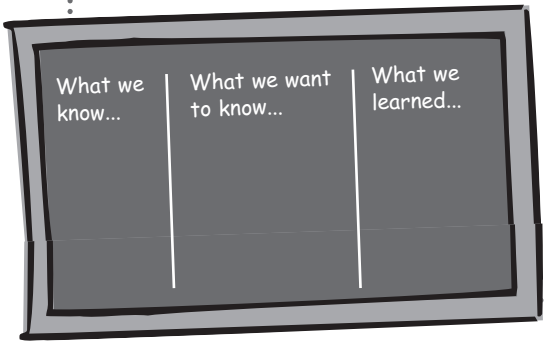
- ► Post the **Think Your Drink** poster; cover so only the title shows
- ► Blackboard or flipchart
- ► Chalk or marker
- ► List on the board or display beverages pictured on the poster
- ► Write three columns on the board or a flipchart:
  - What we know …
  - What we want to know …
  - What we learned ….
- ► "How Much Sugar?" worksheet - 1 per group of 3-4
- ► Scissors
- ► Color paper and glue OR color markers (see next bullet)
- ► Make 1 Beverage Card Set per team of 4 students as follows:
  - Photocopy **Think Your Drink** blackline master
  - Cut apart so there are 8 squares (1 square for each beverage picture and bar graph)
  - Mount each square on colored paper OR draw a border around each as follows:

1% Low-fat milk – blue
1% Chocolate milk – brown
Orange juice – orange
Fruit punch – red
Cola – purple
Diet cola – yellow
Bottled water – dark green
Sports drink – light green

- ► Sugar cubes or packets – 50 per team of 3-4
- ► 1 one–teaspoon measuring spoon
- ► Photocopy **Think Your Drink** blackline master – 1 per student

What to Do

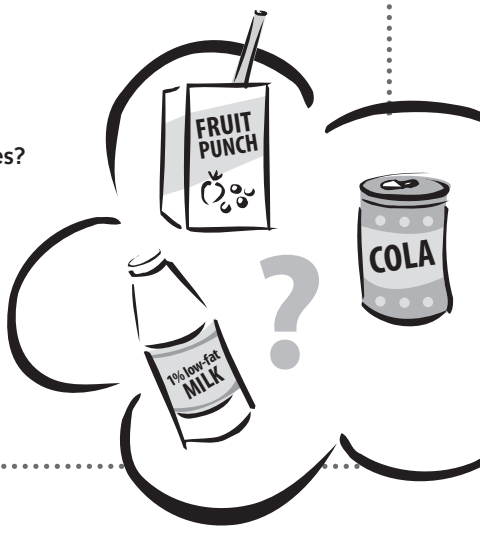
1. Show students the beverage list or display.



ASK:

- **What is your favorite and why do you like it?**
- **Are there any that you drink often? Which ones?**
- **Are there any you never drink? Why?**

Share responses and discuss what students know about these beverages. Record in the "What we know…" column on the board.



Activity

Think Your Drink continued

2. **Next, point out the Think Your Drink poster title.**

ASK:

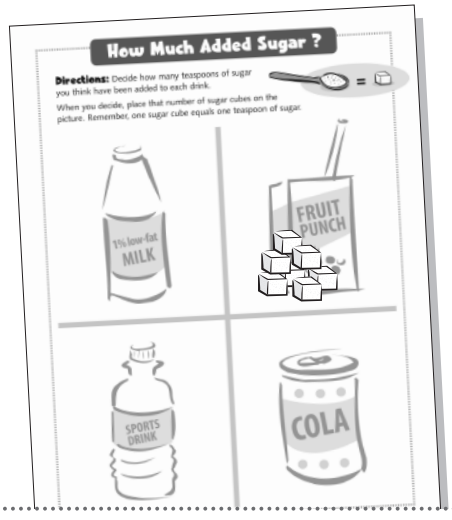
- **What does Think Your Drink mean?** *We need to think about choosing nutritious beverages.*

3. **As a group, complete the "What do we want to learn…" column on the board. Lead into a discussion about sugar in beverages.**

ASK:

- **Which of these drinks taste sweet?** *Chocolate milk, orange juice, fruit punch, cola, diet cola and sports drink.*
- **Are some sweeter than others? Which ones?** *Fruit punch is sweeter than orange juice; chocolate milk is sweeter than plain milk; cola is sweeter than water.*
- **Why does fruit punch taste sweeter than orange juice? Cola sweeter than water? Chocolate milk sweeter than plain milk?** *They all have sugar added to them.*

4. **Introduce and discuss the concept of natural vs. added sugar.**



SAY:

- *Natural sugars are sugars already in food. Foods that are naturally sweet have "natural sugars." Fruits are sweet because of the natural sugar (fructose) in them. Orange juice tastes sweet because the oranges used to make it are naturally sweet. Apple juice is sweet because it is made from apples that are naturally sweet.*
- *Added sugar is **extra**. It is added to foods and drinks to make them sweeter. For example, frosted cornflakes are sweeter than regular cornflakes because sugar is added to them. Chocolate milk is sweeter than plain milk because it has chocolate syrup with sugar added to it.*

ASK:

- **Which of the drinks listed have natural sugar?** *Milk and orange juice. (Milk has a natural sugar lactose. That's why milk may taste slightly sweet to some of us.)*
- **Which drinks have sugar added to them?** *Chocolate milk, fruit punch, cola, sports drink.*

5. **Break into teams of 3–4. Distribute the "How Much Added Sugar?" worksheet and sugar cubes (packets).**

Teacher note: *The number of teaspoons of added sugar is calculated by dividing the amount of "Total Sugars" listed under "Total Carbohydrates" on the Nutrition Facts Panel by 4. There are 4 grams of sugar in 1 teaspoon of sugar.*

DO:

- Show students a sugar cube (packet) and measuring spoon. Explain that each sugar cube (packet) is a teaspoon of sugar.
- Tell the group that their job is to decide how many teaspoons of sugar have been added to each drink pictured. They should put that number of cubes (or packets) on the picture.
- Everyone in the team needs to agree on the number of teaspoons for each drink.
- Have groups share and compare their decisions. Uncover the poster and compare their decisions to the amount of added sugar listed on the poster. *8 ounces of chocolate milk = 4 teaspoons; 8 1/2 ounces fruit punch = 6 3/4 teaspoons; 12 ounces cola = 9 teaspoons; 8 ounces sports drink = 7 teaspoons*

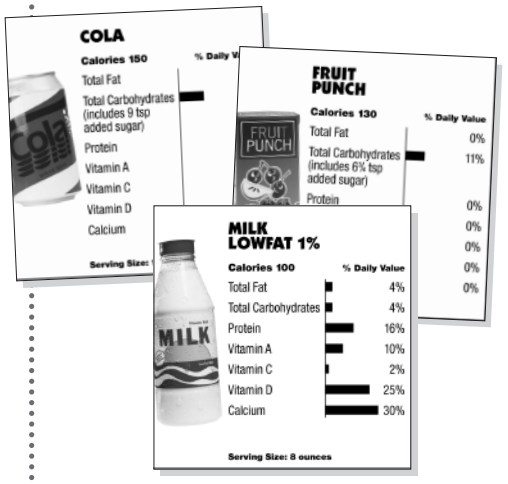
SAY:

"Now let's look at what nutrients these drinks have that help to keep us healthy."

Activity

Think Your Drink continued

6. Divide the group into teams of 4.



DO:

- Distribute a set of "Beverage Cards" to each team.
- Have team members line up, holding their cards from the most to the least amount of protein.
- Point out that protein helps to builld strong muscles.
- Repeat and have students rearrange their lines for calcium, then vitamin A and then vitamin C. Each time, note how the line changes and say how each nutrient helps to keep us healthy.

Vitamin C helps to heal cuts and bruises. For vitamin C, orange juice will be at the beginning of the line. Calcium helps to build strong bones and teeth. For protein and calcium, plain and chocolate milk will be at the beginning of the line. Vitamin A helps us to see in the dark. For vitamin A, 1% low-fat milk and 1% low-fat chocolate milk will be at the beginning of the line.

7. As students rearrange their line for each nutrient, ask and discuss the following questions and key points:

ASK:

What drinks are highest in protein, calcium, vitamin A and vitamin C?

- *Protein, calcium and vitamin A – 1% low-fat milk and 1% low-fat chocolate milk*
- *Vitamin C – orange juice*

Does water have any of these nutrients? *No*

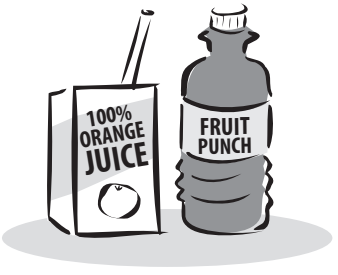
Does that mean we should not drink it?

- *No. We need water for good health.*
- *When you're thirsty grab a glass of water instead of a soda or other sweetened drink. It's a healthy choice. Water is a nutrient that our body needs to function. We cannot live without water.*
- *Drinking water between meals, or during sports or play, is a good way to make sure we get plenty of water every day.*

Discuss the importance of water.

Teacher note: *Children may mention flavored water. Flavored water does not offer any nutritional benefit over regular water, and some may contain small amounts of sugar that can contribute to cavities if children routinely drink them throughout the day.*

Compare the orange juice, fruit punch and sports drink.



How does orange juice compare to the fruit punch and sports drink? What is a better choice?

- *Orange juice has vitamin C and comes from oranges in the Fruit Group. Some fruit drinks, may say "high in vitamin C" on the label because vitamin C has been added. Juice also provides us with other nutrients that help to keep us healthy, not just vitamin C. Fruit punch and sports drinks do not have these other nutrients.*
- *Fruit punch and the sports drink have added sugar. The orange juice does not. They are "extra" foods that don't belong to any of the Food Groups. (Note: Fruit drinks are only 10% fruit juice.)*
- *Kids your age need three servings from the Fruit Group every day. One of these servings can be 100 percent juice. Try to eat whole fruits like apples, bananas, pears or other fruits for your Fruit Group servings.*
- *When you have juice, make sure the label says "100 percent fruit juice."*

Activity

Think Your Drink continued

7. (Continued)
Compare chocolate milk to cola.

Teacher note: *If children mention calcium-fortified juice, point out that it is not a substitute for milk. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines recommend that children consume low-fat milk, cheese or yogurt to meet their daily calcium needs. In addition to calcium, milk provides vitamin D, protein, riboflavin, phosphorous and B vitamins that calcium-fortified juices do not provide.*

Discuss the importance of choosing nutritious beverages.

How does chocolate milk compare to plain milk?

- *Even though a glass of chocolate milk has four teaspoons of added sugar, it also has important nutrients that kids need to grow and stay healthy. Cola contains sugar, and it does not provide any nutrients that help you to grow and stay healthy. Sodas are water, sugar and a little flavoring. Even though diet cola has sugar substitute instead of sugar, it still does not have any nutrients you need for good health.*
- *When we choose soda or diet soda (or fruit or sport drink) for meals and snacks, it "crowds out" the beverages that give us nutrients for good health.*
- *Just like plain milk, chocolate milk has calcium for strong bones, protein for strong muscles and, vitamin A to help you see in the dark. Chocolate milk is a nutritious drink to have with meals or snacks.*
- *Kids need three servings of Milk Group foods every day. A glass of chocolate milk counts as a serving from the Milk Group.*

Why is it important for you to choose nutritious beverages?

- *Nutritious beverages give us the vitamin C, calcium, protein, and other nutrients that you need for growth and good health.*
- *Drinking nutritious beverages instead of sodas, fruit drinks and sports drinks helps to make sure you get the nutrients you need every day to grow and stay healthy.*

8. Have groups return to their seats.

DO:

Distribute **Think Your Drink** handout. Point out that this is the same as the poster.

Give students a few minutes to write on the back of the handout:

- two things they learned and
- one thing they can do to make sure they choose nutritious beverages.

9. As a group, complete the "What we learned…" column on the board. Have students share some things they plan to do to choose nutritious beverages.

Optional: Have students color their handout and display it at home as a reminder to **Think Your Drink!**

Going Further

- For more information and a downloadable video on how to read a label, **visit www.fda.gov**
- For more information about flavored milk, visit **www.NewEnglandDairyCouncil.org** > Foodservice > School Milk > Flavored Milk.
- Give students a variety of beverages in different-size containers. Have them use the information on the Nutrition Facts panel to figure out how much added sugar is in one serving, and then the entire container.

  NOTE: To determine the amount of added sugar in a beverage, divide the amount of "Total Sugars" listed under "Total Carbohydrates" on the label by 4 (4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon of sugar).
- Write a "Think Your Drink!" poem.
- Have students track their beverage consumption for a week, then compile and graph the results.
- Brainstorm strategies for choosing more milk, juice and water, and less soda, fruit drinks, sports drinks and other sweetened beverages. Use the information to create a bulletin board or handout.